

Conspiracy theorist should have



LARRY POWELL

There probably hasn't been a moment since Friday, Nov. 22, 1963, that someone somewhere was not writing something related to the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

Stacked end to end, the books published about JFK would reach from here to the edge of insanity.

Some stretch beyond that.

There's always someone around who claims to know something about the Kennedy assassination.

In the spring of 1992, I got a handwritten letter that was unsigned. It was postmarked Dallas but had no return address. It was in response to a column I'd written about urban myths. The reader, supporting the acceptance of urban myths, wrote: "The trouble with writing the truth is that no one believes it. . . . Take, for instance, an encounter with the ghost of Our Lady of the Lake out there at White Rock. My wife

has asked me why I would not tell this story — why bother, nobody would believe that you could see, hear and talk to a ghost and get answers."

As the letter was drawing to a close, the reader took an unexpected turn. "Oh!" he wrote. "I almost forgot to mention the JFK incident. I don't know who fired the fatal shot. Oswald certainly did not, but I do know who planned and orchestrated the whole deal. Dallas cannot be blamed for his death. The blame for this has to fall on what I call the '4500 Club.' Nearly all the participants live in the 4500 block of different streets in Highland Park. . . . That I know for sure."

The 4500 Club. Round up the usual suspects.

This brings us to what is surely the strangest JFK book ever published. The strangest.

It is a slim, black paperback mailed to this paper more than a year ago by the publisher. The cover reads *VOLCANO: A Scientific Study of the Kennedy, King and Malcolm X Assassinations*. The book doesn't have a price on it. That's not be-

cause it's priceless.

Author David B. Rothman's afterword explains: "*Volcano* was researched, written, financed, designed, typeset, tested, published and distributed entirely by the author. The book was begun in Clinton (N.Y.) Prison in January 1988 and completed in his (the author's) office in midtown Manhattan on March 31, 1992 — the seventh anniversary of the firebombing which sent him to prison."

The first three chapters have to do with a woman from the Philippines who, as far as I can tell, had nothing to do with JFK. The author claims his unveiling of the patterns of assassinations saved her life. He also includes a letter from her telling him to get lost. I'm making this more entertaining than it is.

Back to the JFK thing: In the fourth chapter, Mr. Rothman writes, "I believe the murder of John F. Kennedy was computerized." His supporting evidence, he says, is numerical. He says JFK was president for 1,037 days; that Lee Harvey Oswald was interrogated in Room 317 of the Dallas Police Department; that after leaving the

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book thrown at him

White House, Jacqueline Kennedy moved to 3017 N St. in Washington; that Lyndon Johnson created the Warren Commission with Executive Order 11130 and Congress OK'd that with Joint Resolution 137 on 12-13-63. You see where this is going. It's the assassination and conspiracy theory by the numbers.

Further into the book we learn that Mrs. Kennedy's stepchild **Christina Onassis** "got sick after Coke and Mars (bar) binges. . . . A writer named **Jim Marrs** wrote one of the two books from which the film *JFK* was made." Well, indeed, Mr. Marrs did that. Mr. Rothman, however, overlooks the other strong connection between Jim Marrs and JFK: Mr. Kennedy is buried at *Arlington National Cemetery* and Mr. Marrs has long taught a JFK assassination course at the *University of Texas at Arlington*. *There's some solid proof for you.*

More priceless stuff: "Robert Frost read poetry at JFK's inauguration; **David Frost** interviewed RFK (**Robert F. Kennedy**) two days before Kennedy was shot. (Just coincidentally, Robert Frost died in 1963 at age 88. That matches the program. One of

Frost's most famous poems is about chopping wood. **Jimmy Hoffa** was dismembered with a chain saw, which is usually used to cut wood.)" No doubt about it, we're on the cutting edge here.

In slamming the Secret Service, the author notes that it is taxpayer-financed and "TAXES=TEXAS." Can't argue that.

As far as plain-as-the-nose-on-your-face evidence is concerned, Mr. Rothman wrongly writes: "Three actors have portrayed suave secret agent James Bond, Agent 007, in the movies since the early 1960s. They are **Sean Connery**, **Roger Moore** and **Pierce Brosnan**." That will surprise Mr. Brosnan.

Facts notwithstanding, Mr. Rothman continues, "I believe 'Sean Connery' is a pun on 'John Connally,' which is also a pun on 'Con A Lee,' meaning Lee Oswald was conned into joining the plot."

Mr. Rothman declares of his grand conspiracy theory, "There is no other logical explanation, unless you are willing to dismiss all my evidence as coincidence."

Ready, willing and able.